

United States Department of the Interior

BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

Montana State Office

5001 Southgate Drive, P.O. Box 36800

Billings, Montana 59107-6800

<http://www.mt.blm.gov/>

In Reply To:

1114 (912) P

April 28, 2005

EMAIL TRANSMISSION – 04/28/05

Instruction Memorandum No. MT-2005-038

Expires: 9/30/06

To: State Management Team

From: State Director

Subject: Volunteers, Hosted Workers, and Interns

This instruction memorandum outlines requirements to ensure that volunteers are properly signed up, approved, investigated, provided access to computers and facilities, and terminated. These policies also apply to hosted workers and interns.

Volunteer Agreements

The Individual Volunteer Services Agreement, BLM Form 1114-4 (January 2001), and Group Volunteer Services Agreement, BLM Form 1114-5 (January 2001), provide the legal basis for the relationship between the BLM and volunteers. Every volunteer agreement should clearly state what the BLM can expect from the volunteer, and what the volunteer can expect from the BLM. In case of an accident or dispute, a well-written volunteer agreement can lead to relatively quick resolution instead of lengthy and difficult negotiations. Your volunteer coordinator can help prepare this document.

All volunteers (or the leader of an organized group of volunteers) – whether they are participating in a 1-day National Public Lands Day event or are returning campground hosts – must sign a volunteer agreement before they may contribute their services to the BLM. The agreement should clearly define the project/job description, the specific timeframe for planned service, and any other special terms. If there is a provision for expense reimbursement, the estimated expenses should be clearly itemized.

A permanent staff member must sign section 4 of the form as the BLM project supervisor. A field manager or deputy state director must sign in section 6 as the designated BLM official agreeing to accept the volunteer's service.

Volunteer agreements are valid for up to 1 year, but may be amended for up to 2 more years. They must be re-established after the volunteer's third year of service.

Prospective volunteers must be informed that a Privacy Act Statement is inadvertently missing on Form 1114-4, and the law was promulgated after the last printing of the form. This is rectified by providing the volunteer with the following statement: "Requesting your social security number and birth date on this form shall be used only for internal use and shall be safeguarded against illegal or improper use. This

information is required for the reimbursement of incidental expenses, only. Furnishing this information is voluntary under the Privacy Act, P.L. 93-579, 5 U.S. C. 301 and 7 CFR 260.”

Give a copy of the completed form to the volunteer or, if a group of volunteers, to the group leader. Route the original forms to the appropriate state or field office volunteer coordinator for filing (list attached).

Background Checks

New security requirements have been established to protect the BLM, our volunteers, and the public. Like paid BLM positions, volunteer positions are classified as sensitive or non-sensitive, and the person that fills them must have the proper clearances.

Generally speaking, non-sensitive positions are field-going jobs. In these cases, managers may use their discretion when deciding whether or not a background check is necessary.

Volunteer positions are classified as “sensitive” when the volunteer needs a key or a Smart Card to access BLM facilities; uses the BLM computer system; or when their duties include interaction with children (such as campground hosts). Before beginning to work in a sensitive position, a volunteer must have a Special Agreement Check (SAC). However, exceptions are allowed for campground hosts who have satisfactorily served two or more seasons and do not have access to the BLM computer system.

For other potentially sensitive positions such as those that involve public contact, managers should carefully evaluate each situation when deciding whether or not to conduct a background investigation. While a manager may opt not to do a background check on a longtime visitor center host who has performed in a high quality manner, the decision may be made to investigate a volunteer who is new to BLM service and not well known by BLM staff members.

A SAC must be completed and any issues resolved before an individual may begin volunteering in a sensitive position. This background check helps ensure that we do not give individuals with criminal histories access to our computer systems or facilities, or make them our public representatives. Contact the state volunteer coordinator to initiate a SAC. It can take up to three weeks to complete the process after the volunteer submits the completed forms to us. The benefiting office is responsible for the approximate charge of \$23.

The SAC is the quickest way to clear an individual to volunteer in a sensitive position. Once this step is completed, the Branch of Human Resources will initiate the National Agency Check and Inquiries (NACI). The NACI costs about \$92 to the benefiting office and takes up to three months to complete, but the volunteer may proceed with assigned duties in the meantime. The SAC is a search with the Federal Bureau of Investigation, and because of the timing issues, we do this first. The NACI includes queries with state and local authorities, and past employers.

Keys, Smart Cards, and Computer Access

Volunteers may need to complete the following forms depending upon their need to access BLM buildings and computer systems:

1264-3	Individual Computer User’s Statement of Responsibility
MT-1264-1	New/Returning User Account Request
MT-1102-1	Request for Identification Card (Smart Card)

These forms are available at <http://web.mt.blm.gov/irm/security/itsecurity.html>. If you have any questions, your zone security contact or the Branch of Information Resource Management (IRM) can help.

Annual security training is required for all volunteers with access to our computer system. Like employees, new volunteers need to complete the security training within 2 weeks of starting their duties, and once a year thereafter. The training is available at <http://www.doiu.nbc.gov/itsecurity/>.

Training and Safety

All volunteers must receive the proper supervision and training. Before recruiting or signing up volunteers, work supervisors should carefully evaluate the project/job to determine safety issues and identify necessary training and materials. This process can also help focus recruiting efforts and find volunteers best suited to the task. This is a simple procedure designed to prevent injuries and even fatalities. Your volunteer coordinator has a Volunteer Safety Orientation Checklist that is a good tool to document all the required training for the volunteer.

Special Equipment

A volunteer must be properly certified before using machinery or power equipment on a BLM project. Volunteers may use their own equipment if it is first inspected and determined to be in safe working order.

Hazardous Duty or Law Enforcement

Volunteers must not be assigned duties that would place them in life-threatening situations, even as observers. This includes law enforcement and search and rescue duties. Volunteer agreements may be written to automatically terminate if the individual participates in a search and rescue mission.

Evaluation

Supervisors should consider giving their volunteers some feedback, whether they do it through an informal visit or with an evaluation form (available from a volunteer coordinator). While not required, periodic evaluations can help recognize potential problems, identify further training needs, encourage open communication, and document the volunteer's accomplishments. By the same token, volunteers should be encouraged to make suggestions for improving our programs.

Recognition

Volunteers are a valuable asset to the BLM and should be recognized for their contributions. Please track your volunteer's hours and consider non-monetary awards as appropriate. Volunteers are also eligible for a variety of national awards based on their contributions and hours of service. Field office volunteer coordinators will be notified when these awards are open for nominations.

Volunteer Records

Volunteer coordinators are responsible for ensuring that volunteer records are complete. This includes signed volunteer agreements, expense reimbursement documents, and volunteer hours recorded for tracking purposes.

Reporting

One of the ways we measure the success of our volunteer program is by tracking the number of volunteers we have and how many hours they have contributed. Your volunteer coordinator has simple, one-page forms to track an individual's hours as well as the totals for a given office.

About once a month, the state volunteer coordinator will ask each field office volunteer coordinator to submit a list of current volunteers and the type of work they are doing. This information will be used to help keep the Table of Organization up to date.

At the end of each fiscal year, field office coordinators will also be asked to report the total number of volunteer/hosted worker hours in various categories and the approximate cost to BLM. The MSO will estimate the value of the work by multiplying the total hours by a dollar figure provided by the Washington Office. This information will be used in the Montana/Dakotas annual report and forwarded to the Washington Office for the bureau volunteer annual report.

Completion of Volunteer Service

At the end of a volunteer's service, the supervisor must close out the volunteer agreement and collect any keys, identification cards, etc. that were issued to the volunteer. In addition, notify your zone security contact or MSO IRM to revoke the volunteer's computer access privileges. The necessary forms are available at <http://web.mt.blm.gov/irm/security/itsecurity.html>.

Summary

A checklist is attached to summarize the primary requirements of the volunteer program. Additional information and various forms, checklists and sample job descriptions are available from the volunteer program electronic toolkit at http://web.blm.gov/internal/wo-600/00_wo650_vol/toolkit/index.html, or in the BLM Volunteer Manual (1114). In addition, state and field office volunteer coordinators (see attached list) can assist with any aspect of the volunteer program.

Signed by: Martin C. Ott

Authenticated by: Ann Boucher, External Affairs

5 attachments

- 1-Volunteer Checklist (1 p)
- 2-Processing Background Checks for Volunteers (Instructions for HR and volunteer coordinators) (1 p)
- 3-Form letter to prospective volunteer to initiate background check (1 p)
- 4-Form letter to inform volunteer of completed background check (1 p)
- 5-Montana/Dakotas Volunteer Coordinators (1 p)

Distribution (w/attms.)

Assistant Field Manager, Glasgow Field Station

Assistant Field Manager, Havre Field Station

Volunteer Checklist

Before recruiting a volunteer:

- Plan the project or job. Some things to consider: necessary skills, training, materials and equipment; timeframe; safety considerations; and funding. Your volunteer coordinator has a checklist to help you cover all the bases.

For every volunteer:

- Complete an Individual or Group Volunteer Services Agreement (Form 1114-4 or 1114-5). Volunteer agreements are valid for up to one year, but can be renewed with amendments for 2 more years. They must be re-established after 3 years.
- Give a copy to the volunteer, and send the original to the appropriate volunteer coordinator (see attached list) for filing.
- Provide all necessary training and supervision.
- A periodic evaluation is recommended.
- Recognize the volunteer's contributions; consider giving awards as appropriate.
- When the volunteer finishes service, close out the volunteer agreement and reclaim any keys, identification cards, etc. that were issued to the volunteer. Also notify MSO IRM to revoke computer access.
- Volunteers may be reimbursed for such items as mileage, meals, and out-of-pocket costs while on assignment, but reimbursement is not required. Before signing on volunteers, determine if/how they will be reimbursed and clearly state the conditions on their volunteer agreements. Estimated expenses should be clearly itemized.

For volunteers in non-sensitive positions (field-going):

- Background checks are done at the discretion of the manager.

For volunteers in sensitive positions (such as campground hosts; BLM computer system users; and/or those who are issued keys or Smart Cards to access BLM facilities):

- Contact the state office volunteer coordinator to initiate the SAC (Special Agreements Check). This process can take up to 3 weeks and must be complete and any issues resolved before the volunteer can take on "sensitive" duties. The cost is about \$23 to the benefiting office.
- For volunteers who will be using the BLM computer system, contact the MSO IRM to establish a log-in. IRM will not grant access privileges until a SAC is completed and any issues are resolved. The necessary forms are available at <http://web.mt.blm.gov/irm/security/itsecurity.html>.
- Volunteers who use the BLM computer system must also complete the security training (located at <http://www.doiu.nbc.gov/itsecurity/>) within 2 weeks of beginning their duties.
- Once the individual is cleared to start volunteering, HR will initiate the National Agency Check and Inquiries (NACI) for a more thorough investigation. This process can take up to 4 months, but the individual may volunteer while waiting. The benefiting office will be billed the approximate cost of \$92.
- Exceptions may be made for campground hosts who have satisfactorily served 2 or more seasons and who do not have access to the BLM computer system.

Reporting

- The MSO will ask each field office to update its list of current volunteers about once a month. At the end of each fiscal year, field offices will also be asked to report how many volunteers they had, how many hours they contributed in various categories, and the approximate cost to BLM.

Processing Background Checks for Volunteers

(Instructions for HR and volunteer coordinators)

Once the decision is made to use a volunteer in a “sensitive” position (access to BLM computer system or facilities; or long-term campground host working with children):

- State volunteer coordinator sends form letter (sample attached) along with the Fingerprint Chart (FD-258) and Questionnaire for Non-Sensitive Positions (SF-85) to the prospective volunteer. A cc of the letter is sent to Donna Zentz, Branch of Human Resources (HR). Include a charge code for both the SAC (\$23) and the NACI (\$92). Although the SF-85 is designed for employees, it is also used for “sensitive” volunteer positions.
- The letter instructs the potential volunteer to complete the forms (and retain any receipt needed for reimbursement for fingerprinting), and return them to Donna Zentz in HR.
- Upon receipt (within 1 day), HR forwards the Fingerprint Chart to OPM via overnight mail, requesting completion of a Special Agreement Check (SAC).
- Upon notification by OPM that the SAC is complete with no issues, HR (Donna Zentz) will notify the state volunteer coordinator that the person may begin volunteering. The state volunteer coordinator will notify the volunteer, work supervisor, and Norma Smith so she can issue access to the computer system.
 - If issues are identified by OPM, HR (Chuck Sandau/Diane Friez) will adjudicate them and make a determination, in conjunction with the field office volunteer coordinator/supervisor, as to whether or not the potential volunteer is suitable.
 - Once an individual is cleared to start volunteering, HR will request the National Agency Check and Inquiries (NACI). (Donna will provide copies of the completed SAC paperwork to Connie Raynock, Cheri Diaz or Verlaine Van Atta, and they will initiate the NACI request. We will use the SF-85 that was completed and returned with the fingerprints.
- Organizations serviced:
 - Connie: 010, 020, 910, 930
 - Verlaine: 050, 070, 100, 920
 - Cheri: 030, 040, 060, 090
- Upon completion of the NACI, the paperwork will be filed in the Investigation File in HR. The supervisor will be notified by HR (Chuck/Diane) if issues arise that must be handled.

- Cost of a SAC - \$23
- Cost of a NACI - \$92



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1114 (912)

Dear _____:

Thank you for your tentative commitment to serve as a volunteer for the Bureau of Land Management in the _____ Field/State Office.

Because a security clearance is required for the type of task you would like to do (BLM computer access, BLM facilities access, long-term campground or visitor center host), our acceptance of your volunteer services is subject to the results of a background check.

To begin this process, please complete the enclosed Fingerprint Chart (FD-258 -- no substitutions, please) and Questionnaire for Non-Sensitive Positions (SF-85). Check with your local law enforcement office to have your fingerprints taken. If there is a charge for the fingerprinting, please keep your receipt for reimbursement.

Please return the completed forms to the Montana State Office, Branch of Human Resources (Attention Donna Zentz), PO Box 36800, Billings, Montana 59107, in the envelope provided within 5 calendar days of receipt. If you are unable to return the forms within this timeframe, please contact our office or the tentative agreement may be withdrawn.

Once we receive this information, we will initiate a Special Agreements Check through the Office of Personnel Management. Before you may begin volunteering, we must receive evidence of an acceptable background check. This process is expected to take about 2 weeks, and you will be notified in writing of the results.

If you complete the volunteer agreement and commit to a long term arrangement with BLM, please be advised that you will be subject to an additional, more in-depth background investigation.

If you have any questions, you may contact me at 406-896-5011. If you have any questions related to the background investigation process, contact the Human Resources Office, 406-896-5002.

Sincerely,

Ann Boucher
State Volunteer Coordinator

3 Enclosures

- 1-FD-258, Fingerprint Chart (1 p)
- 2-SF-85, Questionnaire for Non-Sensitive Positions
- 3-Return Envelope

cc: (w/o enclosures)
Donna Zentz, MT933
Field Office Volunteer Coordinator

Attachment 3



In Reply To:

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Montana State Office

5001 Southgate Drive, P.O. Box 36800

Billings, Montana 59107-6800

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1114 (912)

Address

Dear _____:

Based on a favorable Special Agreement Check (SAC), we are pleased to accept your volunteer services. You should report to _____ at the _____ Field/State Office, on _____.

Your supervisor will work with you to complete an Individual Volunteer Services Agreement which will list your duties and define any special terms of your volunteer service. You may also need to complete other forms depending on your need to access BLM facilities or computer systems.

Thank you in advance for volunteering your services. We hope you will find your experience with the Bureau of Land Management to be both enjoyable and rewarding.

If you have any questions, please contact me at 406-896-5011.

Sincerely,

Ann Boucher
State Office Volunteer Coordinator

cc:
Field Office Volunteer Coordinator

Montana/Dakotas Volunteer Coordinators

Billings	Sharon Ross	406-896-5027
Butte	Alice Paetzel	406-533-7602
Dillon	Angie Morse	406-683-8004
Lewistown	Sandra Padilla	406-538-1916
Miles City	Lori Harbaugh	406-233-2830
Malta/Glasgow	Jon Collins	406-228-3750
Havre	Laura Federspiel	406-265-2834
Missoula	Suzanne Brist	406-329-3913
North Dakota	Connie Kolling	701-227-7729
South Dakota	Bill Monahan	605-892-7003
MSO/State Coordinator	Ann Boucher	406-896-5011